

Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, May 3, 1842, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Washington, May 3, 1842.

My Dear Genl, Major Lewis handed me today the duplicate Agreement and your letter. The Senate are now engaged upon amendments to the appropriation Bill. The motion is to strike out an appropriation for the rubbish Books of Gales and Seaton and Clarke and Force which are made use of annually to pension these parasites. The amount now proposed is $53:000!! 1 Nothing is more abominable than this collusion between the parasites and Congressmen, the one to get money, the other to get Books to which they are not entitled, the more general motive being to support a corrupt Press. This trifling affair may delay the appropriation Bill some weeks by sending it back to the House of Representatives which may insist. I trust however that it will pass soon while the exchange is in such a condition that Andrew may have the greatest advantage of it in settling his affairs. It makes me happy to think that the time approaches which will enable you to arrange all to your satisfaction and to dismiss Andrew's difficulties from your mind.

1 Matthew St. Clair Clarke and Peter Force had a contract to publish the American Archives at an excessive price. The affair aroused much opposition. See J. S. Bassett, *The Middle Group of American Historians*, pp. 246–274. Gales and Seaton published the American State Papers and the Register of Congressional Debates. The resolution to which Blair referred was first passed by the House on Mar. 2, 1841, but found much opposition in the Senate. It referred to the distribution of the publications mentioned, with others, to members of Congress who had taken their seats since the last distribution.

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I am proud of the fine strain of the fillies, one of which you mean to crown with the honors of Emuckfau and send to grace my little domain [at] Silver Spring. I am glad you have brought them under your own eye and will choose for me, after having made one of them your favorite. This will add to the value of the animal as one of your nurselings, and will be taken care of by me with increased pleasure from that circumstance. Betsy and my Midshipman James (expected home in June next) will visit you during the fall or summer, and then you will put them in charge of the daughter of Truxton or Pacolet, whichever you may prefer. Betsy already lays claim to the high-blooded damsel of the Hermitage. And I should not be astonished, if, when her race with General Gibson comes off which I have challenged, Betsy were to propose to ride against the General.

All is going well for our politics as you will perceive from the news in the Globe. You will live to see those of your friends whom you put in, again restored with your principles, to power. I shall rejoice in it, with redoubled pleasure, if you shall be a looker-on of the triumph from 0176 152 the loop holes of the Hermitage. And I have no doubt it will increase the gratification of every Democrat in America to have [you] witness their political success. Mr. Van Buren's visit to you under present circumstances, will I am sure prove much more agreeable to you than it would have been last year. And I am pleased that he took his own time, instead of that which I would have chosen for him. I think you may both now congratulate each other on an approaching victory, instead of mourning together over a recent defeat, accomplished by fraud, corruption, and every species of villany

Present us affectionately to your dear household. My wife and daughter send their love to them all and to you the heartfelt gratitude which they owe you more than to any other human being—not excepting your mo. af. friend,